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CONTACT: Sarah Dalton
California State Library
916/654-1483

***California Research Bureau Convenes
Radio-Frequency Identification Document (RFID) Advisory Panel***

SACRAMENTO – At the request of State Senator Joe Simitian (D- Palo Alto), the California Research Bureau (CRB) at the California State Library is researching the security and privacy questions surrounding government-issued, remotely readable identification documents that make use of radio-frequency identification (RFID) technologies. A CRB report to the legislature on this subject is due early next year.

RFID technologies are tiny devices that use integrated circuits and an antenna to store or process data and to transmit information to a reader by the modulation of radio waves. RFID technologies are utilized in pet identification implants, retail inventory tracking devices, bridge toll collection, and in some identification documents.

“Radio-Frequency Identification technologies are nothing new: they’ve been around since at least World War II,” says Dean Mischynski, Director of the California Research Bureau, “What’s new are modern day privacy concerns and identity theft issues.”

The CRB has established an eleven-person Radio-Frequency Identification Document Advisory Panel comprised of government officials, industry representatives, and privacy rights organizations as technical consultants to assist the CRB in the identification of technological options for ensuring the security and privacy of RFID-enabled identity documents.

The Advisory Panel will convene for their first meeting on October 31, 2007 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Room 500 of the Stanley Mosk Library and Courts Building located at 914 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, directly across from the State Capitol building. At that meeting, panel members will see presentations regarding the various issues and concerns surrounding the use of RFID technologies. The meeting will also include time for public comments to the Advisory Panel. Additional details regarding the project are available online at <http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/rfidap/index.html>.

“Our goal is to be proactive, to examine security alternatives now, before problems arise,” says Mischynski, “We’re looking to produce a package of viable options for the Legislature to consider that will ensure the private information encoded in government-issued identification documents remains private.”

Interested parties can leave messages or send information to the Advisory Panel via e-mail (RFID@library.ca.gov), phone: (916) 653-6272, fax: (916) 653-1764, or postal mail:

Radio-Frequency Identification Document Advisory Panel
c/o California Research Bureau
P.O. Box 942837
Sacramento, California 94237-0001

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